



### Travel Tips to Prevent Bed Bugs

There has been a resurgence of bedbugs in recent years due in part to replacing older, broadband pest control methods with modern, focused and environmentally responsive ones. Bedbugs are now being encountered in homes, apartments, hotels, dorms, and shelters. Many prominent hotels have been infested with bedbugs so the pests may come home with you in your luggage or clothing no matter where you stay; the cost of the room is not a guarantee. Favorite hiding spots are in mattresses, box springs, bed frame and clutter. Bedbugs are most active in the middle of the night.

### Prevention When Traveling

- Place luggage up on luggage rack and not on floor. Do not place clothing or personal items on the floor. Seal dirty laundry in a plastic bag.
- Inspect behind headboards and bed frames, as the headboard is often the first place that bugs become established. Bedbugs have an affinity for wood and fabric more so than metal or plastic.
- Examine between the mattress, upholstered chairs or sofas, especially along seams and edging, skirts and crevices. Other common hiding spots are: edges of wall-to-wall carpeting, cracks in molding, behind picture frames, under loose wallpaper, under beds, in closets, inside clocks, phones, TVs, computers and even smoke-detectors. Often you will smell a musty odor.
- If you suspect the presence of the pests, demand another room immediately and be sure to inspect there, also.

### Returning Home after Traveling

Suspect bed bugs if “bites” occur while sleeping.

Suspect if you see brownish-red fecal spots on bed linens or mattress.

You must collect live crawling bugs to confirm.

- Wash clothing at 120 degrees as soon as you arrive home or garments will need to be discarded.
- Items that can not be laundered can sometimes be de-infested by heating at the highest setting for 30 minutes in the dryer.
- Other items can be wrapped in plastic and placed in a hot, sunny location for at least a few days at 120 degrees minimum.
- Leaving luggage full of clothes for several days in a closed vehicle in full summer sun *may* render the items bug free.
- Some items that would be damaged by heat can be chilled to below 32 degrees for at least two weeks or –10 degrees for 1 week.

- Suitcases should be carefully inspected and scrubbed with a stiff brush and vacuumed. When done, vacuum bag must be placed immediately in a sealed plastic bag and placed outside in trash.
- Dismantle bed frames to expose hiding places.
- Mattresses and box springs, if not discarded, must be permanently encased in sealed mattress bags.
- Use the suction wand on your vacuum and scrape along seams, tufts, edges of bedding, and perimeter of wall to wall carpets. Full vacuum bags must be sealed in plastic bags before disposing out of doors.
- Get a licensed pest control operator to confirm an infestation and to develop a pest control plan.
- See your health care provider for an evaluation of the bites. [If you are back at La Salle, contact the Student Health Center immediately \(x1565\).](#)